

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
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AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN NEW YORK 01128

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PORG, UNSC, PLO, IS, LE, XF
SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: ARAFAT REQUEST FOR SYG STATEMENT
ON CEASEFIRE

1. SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATION WITH ERSKINE MARCH 27 ARAFAT
SAID HE ACCEPTED CEASEFIRE AND WOULD SAY SO PUBLICLY IF
SYG WALDHEIM WOULD MAKE PUBLIC THAT HE HAD APPEALED TO
ARAFAT TO COMPLY. WE HAVE INFORMED UN WE WOULD NOT
OBJECT TO SUCH SYG STATEMENT IF UN WERE TO INFORM
ISRAELIS IN ADVANCE, INCLUDE IN STATEMENT SOME REFERENCE
TO LEBANESE GOVT, AND CAST STATEMENT IN CONTEXT OF SYG'S
CALL FOR CEASEFIRE. END SUMMARY.

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PAGE 02 USUN N 01128 281809Z

2. UN USYG GUYER CALLED AMB LEONARD URGENTLY EARLY MARCH
28 TO CONVEY THE REPORT HE HAD RECEIVED FROM GENERAL
ERSKINE ON ERSKINE'S MARCH 27 MEETING WITH ARAFAT.
ERSKINE SAID ARAFAT COMPLAINED THAT THE PALESTINIANS HAVE
BEEN IGNORED THUS FAR, EVEN THOUGH EVERYONE KNOWS THEIR
COOPERATION IS ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS OF THE UN PEACEKEEPING
EFFORT. ERSKINE NOTED THE SYG'S APPEAL FOR ALL PARTIES TO

CEASEFIRE AND COOPERATE WITH THE UN EFFORT. ARAFAT SAID HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR THE SYG'S STATEMENT, BUT HE CLAIMED THAT THE ISRAELIS WERE STILL ADVANCING. ERSKINE, WITHOUT ACCEPTING OR TAKING ISSUE WITH THAT LAST CLAIM, OBSERVED THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO PLO ACCEPTANCE OF THE CEASEFIRE. ARAFAT RESPONDED THAT HE PERSONALLY ACCEPTS THE CALL FOR A CEASEFIRE AND IS DEEPLY GRATEFUL FOR IT. HE SAID HE WOULD BE WILLING TO MAKE THAT ACCEPTANCE PUBLIC IF REPEAT IF WALDHEIM WERE WILLING TO STATE PUBLICLY THAT HE HAS APPEALED TO ARAFAT TO ADHERE TO THE CEASEFIRE AND CO-OPERATE WITH THE UN EFFORT.

3. GUYER, EVEN BEFORE REPORTING THE ABOVE TO WALDHEIM, ASKED URGENTLY FOR US REACTIONS/COMMENTS FOR WALDHEIM'S CONSIDERATION IN DECIDING ON A RESPONSE TO ARAFAT. LEONARD SAID HE WOULD SEEK THE DEPARTMENT'S QUICK REACTION, BUT PERSONALLY, EVEN RECOGNIZING THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PROBLEM OF THE STATUS AND LEVERAGE OF THE PLO IN LEBANON AND IN THE UN, HE DID NOT THINK A CAREFULLY DRAFTED WALDHEIM STATEMENT MEETING THIS REQUEST WOULD ENHANCE ARAFAT'S POSITION FURTHER TO ANY PRACTICAL DEGREE. HE TOLD GUYER THAT FOR A FIRM AND DEPENDABLE CEASEFIRE, AND POSSIBLY FURTHER COOPERATION OF THE PLO WITH THE WHOLE EFFORT, THE PRICE OF THE STATEMENT WAS CHEAP.

4. FOLLOWING URGENT CONSULTATIONS WITH DEPT, LEONARD
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PAGE 03 USUN N 01128 281809Z

INFORMED GUYER THAT US WOULD NOT OBJECT TO SYG STATEMENT REQUESTED BY ARAFAT BUT HAD SEVERAL CAVEATS: A) WE THOUGHT UN WOULD BE WELL-ADVISED TO INFORM (NOT CONSULT WITH) ISRAELIS BEFORE ISSUING STATEMENT. B) IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR GOL TO BE WOVEN INTO THE STATEMENT, FOR EXAMPLE WITH SUCH FORMULATION AS "IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WISHES OF THE GOL", "FOR THE SAKE OF A CEASEFIRE SOUGHT BY THE GOL", OR "TO REESTABLISH THE AUTHORITY OF THE GOL." C) THE STATEMENT SHOULD BE CAST IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SYG'S CALL FOR A CEASEFIRE (USUN 1122) THROUGH INCLUSION OF SUCH WORDING AS "SYG HAS DRAWN THE ATTENTION OF ARAFAT TO...."

5. GUYER WAS VERY APPRECIATIVE OF OUR RAPID RESPONSE AND ACCEPTED OUR CAVEATS. LEONARD

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